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REPORTS BY DIVISIONS AND GOVERNMENTS ON THE SITUATION IN THEIR REGIONS AND COUNTRIES AND ON THE PROGRESS MADE IN THE STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES SINCE THE SIXTH CONFERENCE

Report of the Baltic Division

Paper submitted by Estonia**

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REPORT OF THE BALTIC DIVISION

The Baltic Division of the United Nations Group of Experts was established in pursuance of Resolution 1 of the Sixth United Nations Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names in 1992. The Division comprises of experts from Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the Russian Federation.

The work of the countries of the Division has mainly focused on the national programmes of the onomastic, cartographic and geographic institutions of the countries concerned. The reviews and results of the work are discussed in detail in the national reports of the individual countries.

DIVISIONAL MEETINGS

By the invitation of the Governmental Place Names Committee of Estonia the **First Meeting** of the Baltic Division was held in Tallinn, 26-27 October 1995, attended by 33 experts from 8 countries (Belarus, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Sweden, Ukraine, United States), including observers. Participants discussed national standardization of place names, policy on exonyms and the implementation of United Nations resolutions on names standardisation. Particular emphasis was put on legislation concerning geographical names, as there had been drafts of laws compiled in Estonia and Latvia, dealing with the subject. Experts of the Division were also pleased to have reviews on names standardization activities in countries that sent observers to the meeting. Discussing organization of the Division, it was agreed that Estonia would coordinate the activities of the Division until the Seventh Conference. Experts elected Peeter Päll (Estonia) Chairman and Ojārs Bušs (Latvia) Vice-Chairman of the Division.

A **working meeting** of the Division was held in Rīga on 6 May 1996, attended by 20 experts from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Besides having usual reports on the development of national standardization programmes the plan of actions for the future was discussed. It was decided to research into the possibilities of organizing toponymic training courses for the region in 1997. Also the importance of toponymic guidelines for map and other editors was emphasized. Lively discussion took place on the role of dialects in standardizing place names.

The State Land Service of Latvia hosted the **Second Meeting** of the Baltic Division in Rīga, on 25 April 1997. The meeting followed successfully held international toponymic courses, and it was attended by 36 experts from 10 countries, including 29 participants from the four member countries of the Division (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russian Federation) and 7 observers from 6 other countries (Canada, Finland, Norway, Poland, Sweden, United States). Reports presented dealt with activities of national mapping authorities and onomastic institutions in the field of geographical names standardization. Preparations for the Seventh United Nations Conference were also discussed. It was agreed that Latvia would coordinate the activities of the Division for the next inter-conference period. Experts elected Jurģis Kavacs (Latvia) Chairman and Vidas Garliauskas (Lithuania) Vice-Chairman of the Baltic Division.

PARTICIPATION IN OTHER UNGEGN ACTIVITIES

Experts from Estonia and the Russian Federation attended the 17th and 18th sessions of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names, on 13-24 June 1994 and 12-23 August 1996, respectively. Reports on the activities of the Baltic Division were presented at both sessions.

Representatives of Estonia and Lithuania were guests at the First Meeting of the Eastern Europe, Northern and

Central Asia Division of UNGEGN, held in Kiev, Ukraine in October 1994. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania were represented as observers also at the Second Meeting of the same division, held in Moscow in July 1996.

A representative of Estonia participated at the meeting of the Norden Division of UNGEGN in Oslo, May 1997. Both that and earlier participations by the Norden Division experts at meetings of the Baltic Division should be considered as an example of fruitful cooperation between various divisions of UNGEGN.

TOPONYMIC TRAINING COURSES

On 22 - 24 April 1997 the State Land Service of Latvia, the Scientific Laboratory of Regional Cartography and Toponymy at the University of Latvia, the State Language Centre, the Latvian Language Institute and the Baltic Division of UNGEGN organized in Rīga the International Training Courses in Toponymy of the Baltic Division of UNGEGN that was attended by 74 participants from 10 countries.

The course attendants were given a wide range of lectures on both international aspects of geographical names standardization as well as on national programmes in the Nordic countries, Canada and the United States. Particular emphasis was put on names automatization: data processing, database models, maintenance procedures, names web sites, etc. One day was devoted to matters of the Baltic Division members, this included a lively round table discussion on the standardization of dialectal names (reviews on policies in the three Baltic states as well as in Canada, Norway and Sweden) and toponymic guidelines.

These courses were highly valued by the participants who represented a whole range of institutions: national mapping authorities, language institutes, universities and academies of sciences, ministries, post agencies, statistics boards, national registers, schools and organizations dealing with research into local history.

The most sincere thanks are due to all guest lecturers from the Nordic countries, Canada and the United States who contributed most decisively to the success of the courses. The list of papers and other materials (incl. books, journals, maps and other publications as well as sets of transparents) presented exceeded over 50 items.

Participants were impressed by the smooth organization and exceptional hospitality shown by the Latvian hosts during the courses.

TOPONYMIC WEB SITES

Following the establishment of the homepage by the Place Names Board of Estonia, one of its pages

http://www.eki.ee/knn/ungegn/

also displays documents related to the activities of the Baltic Division of UNGEGN. Currently all reports of the Division presented at UNGEGN sessions, and reports of the divisional meetings have been published. It is hoped that in the future a number of other documents will be added, thus giving effective new means for divisional cooperation.

STANDARDIZATION OF GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES IN LITHUANIA [1]

National standardization: names authorities

Standardization of geographical names is the responsibility of the Government. The State Committee of the Lithuanian Language at Seimas (parliament) of Lithuania functions as the names authority. A consultative subcommittee has been set up to deal with geographical names, it comprises of linguists, cartographers as well as representatives of various government agencies. The subcommittee reviews all naming proposals, name lists, spelling rules, etc. prior to their approval by the State Committee. The committee's decision is legally binding, adherence to the standards is supervised by a language inspection.

The Law on Local Government Units and Their Boundaries stipulates that names of populated places, applied by local governments, will be approved by the Government, after having considered the proposals of local inhabitants. Name applications, before their approval, should be accompanied by a written statement of the Onomastics Department, Institute of Lithuanian Language. Local governments are responsible for naming streets, squares and other local features within their boundaries.

Field collection of place names and mapping programmes

The field collection of Lithuanian place names was started in 1935 and is now almost complete with about 700,000 names in the card index at the Institute of Lithuanian Language. Each name record indicates localisation of the named feature (district, apilinka or parish, settlement), pronunciation of the name (often in the local dialect), year of collection, etc. Another source of names are lists of various standardized toponyms in compilation of which extensive field work was also carried out.

The national mapping authority, recently reorganized National Service of Geodesy and Cartography at the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, in entering geographical names on maps, relies mainly on published sources and the collections of place names at the Institute of Lithuanian Language. All maps will be checked at the Onomastics Department of the Institute of Lithuanian Language.

In 1995 the topographical map of Lithuania (1 : 200,000) on 24 sheets was published, also several tens of sheets of maps on scale 1 : 10,000 have been printed, as well as two nautical charts 22006-L and 82001 (1 : 200,000). Production of a topographical map according to the NATO standards of 1 : 50,000 has started, several sheets have been printed. An administrative map of Lithuania (1 : 600,000) was produced in 1992.

Registers, gazetteers and toponymic data files

Apart from the collections of place names at the Institute of Lithuanian Language the following published sources of standardized names could be mentioned: *Lietuvos TSR administracinio-teritorinio suskirstymo žinynas, I dalis*. Vilnius 1974, *II dalis*, Vilnius 1976 (names of populated places, officially reaffirmed in 1991); *Lietuvos TSR upių ir ežerų vardynas*. Vilnius 1963 (names of rivers and lakes of Lithuania).

In 1992-1997 the following gazetteers were published:

1) *Lietuvos miškų vardynas*. I (Names of Lithuanian forests, an alphabetical index of 8,000 forests). Kaunas 1994
2) *Lietuvos durpynų kadastras*. I-II. (Names of Lithuanian peat bogs, 7,000 names). Vilnius 1995
3) *Vietovardžių kirčiavimo žodynas* (Pronunciation dictionary of Lithuanian place names, compiled by M. Razmukaitė and V. Vitkauskas. Vilnius 1994)

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[1] information for the preparation of this section of the report was provided by the Institute of Lithuanian Language and the National Service of Geodesy and Cartography

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4) *Lietuvos miestų vardai* (Names of Lithuanian towns by Aleksandras Vanagas, edited by V. Maciejauskienė. Vilnius, Mokslo ir enciklopedijų leidykla, 1996)

A comprehensive dictionary of Lithuanian place names "Lietuvos vietovardžių žodynas" is planned, currently compiling instructions are being prepared.

At the National Service of Geodesy and Cartography digital mapping (1 : 50,000) on the basis of satellite pictures will be completed by the end of 1997. The LTDBK 50000-V database comprises of 135 sheets, geographical names on each sheet are available in a digital format. In the GIS Centre the georeference database at scale 1 : 200,000 (GDB 200) is available.

Various other government agencies are maintaining registers or cadastres on different geographical and other features: administrative units and populated places; lakes and reservoires; streets; roads; forests; preserved areas; rivers; physio-geographical features for GIS applications; territories and countries of the world (on the basis of the ISO 3166 standard).

Exonyms

The principles of writing foreign place names are undergoing a period of transition at present. For place names the traditional practice has been transcription and this was reflected in the instruction for writing non-Lithuanian names in the Lithuanian encyclopædia (1986). In compiling the map of 1 : 200,00 of Lithuania the first attempt was made to use the original spellings or transliterations of names. Transliteration rules for Russian and Byelorussian names were adopted in 1990-1991. In 1991 the State Committee of the Lithuanian Language allowed the use of original, i.e. non-transcribed name forms in scientific and other special texts, however recommending that traditional transcriptions be preserved in educational literature. Rooted exonyms like *Lenkija* 'Poland', *Vokietija* 'Germany', *Paryžius* 'Paris', *Viena* 'Wien', etc. will be maintained.

A special category of exonyms are authentic Lithuanian place names of adjoining territories that reflect historical relationship of Lithuania with the places. Another problematic area that needs special attention and historical reevaluation is the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation. In August 1997 the State Committee of the Lithuanian Language approved a list of 500 traditional Lithuanian names of the Kaliningrad region, prepared by M. Razmukaitė.

The State Committee of the Lithuanian Language approved in January 1995 the list of names of countries (short and long forms of names in Lithuanian, published in "Gimtoji kalba" 1995 No 3) and in May 1996 the list of capital names. The Committee also adopted in February 1996 the Lithuanian equivalent to the international system for the romanization of Chinese names (*pinyin*), and in 1997 the Lithuanian equivalent to the romanization system of Japanese names.

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